



## Korps Polite Aruba releases their annual report for 2006

On Monday afternoon, May 21, Chief Commissioner of Police Peter de Witte welcomed press members to police headquarters in Macuarina for the presentation of their annual report 2006. Joining him in presenting the report were Edwin Comenencia, spokesperson for the Aruba Police Force and Errol Zebeda, who compiled and presented the report.

Mr. Zebeda particularly brought attention to the fact that what was presented was only a compilation of figures and statistics, and has yet to be analyzed and interpreted, an additional report they expect to deliver in September. He also pointed out that this report was of particular interest, as 2006 was the twenty-year anniversary of Aruba's Status Aparte, and its own independent police department. Some statistical comparisons as to the changes in the twenty years since the founding of an independent Aruban police corps were of interest.

In 1986, the police corps numbered 316 personnel as compared to 539 in 2006. The legally registered population of Aruba has nearly doubled in twenty years; from 59,444 residents to 103,484. In 1986, the ratio of population to police officers was 271:1, in 2006, it was 243:1, and so despite the vast increase of population, the police corps is keeping a steady ratio. Chief Commissioner De Witte commented that ideally, they would hope to increase the police corps staff, and there is a plan to begin training of fifty new officers, pending government approval. A course for entry-level police officers takes two years, for officers of rank in supervisory positions, four years.

In the year 2006, the Aruban Police were host for a number of events, which went very smoothly. These included the 21<sup>st</sup> ACCP Annual General Meeting and Conference, a "Good Practice" visit from Interpol, and a visit from her Royal Highness, Queen Beatrix.

Crime statistics showed a very slight rise of an additional 130 reported incidents since 2005, but still a decrease over cases reported in 2002. In a comparison over the last five years, it would appear that reported incidents in the town of Oranjestad showed a marked increase, and is the largest percentage of reported crimes.

Commissioner De Witte pointed out that in the case of violent deaths in 2006; the Aruban detectives have a 100% success rate of solving the cases. As a twenty-six year police veteran, quite a bit of that time spent on the Rotterdam police force, and compared to other law enforcement agencies in the area, he finds the results exemplary.

Additionally included in the report were traffic statistics, which counted fourteen traffic deaths in 2006. It noted that in 2007 there are eleven traffic deaths so far, indicating that this year may show an increase.